

THE CITIES

Just Vindication:

O R,
A Scourge for a Vagabond LIBEL,
INTITULED,
Goodman Country to his Worship the City.

I Shall not spend time in Hunting out the *Absconded* Author of this Paper, Though by the impertinent Contents *dangling* down its sides, one might give a shrewd guess. There is a certain Worshipful Scribbler that pesters the Town with a Litter of Pamphlets much of the same complexion, and just so accounted, Buffoon in the Text, and Statesman in the Margin. But whether it be He, or onely some puny Imitator of the same Cast, is not much material. Our business is to consider its matter and scope; which, without Spectacles of Prejudice, may be discovered to be *A Libel* upon the City of London; and perhaps it is the first time that ever that Honourable Corporation was so openly and effrontedly, and withal so causelessly scandalld: For can any thing be more false and slanderous than that — *The City proudly and insolently calls all the Protestants that go to Church, by the name of Church-Papists, and Popishly affected?* And yet this He no less than four times repeats in less than forty lines. Again, he takes them all to task — *Come, come, leave your Madness and Fooling:* As if our Citizens, every Mothers Childe, were turn'd Bedlamites and Jack-Adamses. Nay, not content to represent them as Changlings and Mad men, he makes them Cannibals and Villains too, that will *Treat the best and greatest part of the Nation with Blows and bloody Persecution.* And immediately after feigns them ready prepared for a Rebellion, longing after an *Holy War*, to fight the *Lords Battel*; and prescribes *where they shall muster*, and *where they must not quarter their Troops*, &c. Now what can all this tend to, but to create Jealousies in the mind of the King? (were he not (as we know, and blest God he is) a Prince of greater wisdom than to hearken to the mischievous suggestions of any such vile mercenary Incendiaries;) To make him suspect the Loyalty of his Imperial City? and render the Inhabitants thereof infamous, and for ever odious to all the good People and Loyal Subjects in the world?

But what's the matter? what horrid Crime has London committed to give cause for such black Reflections? Nothing in the world, Sirs, but chosen according to Custom a couple of Sheriffs. This our Author acknowledges at first step, the occasion of all his out-cries. *We have of late been in a woundy Pudder and Tattle about the Election of Sheriffs.* Here he belies the Country as liberally as afterwards the City; for sure Country-men are generally more discreet than to trouble themselves so much about a matter that did not concern them; especially if they are so very indifferent as He presently tells us, *Not to care what they are, or what they will be, or what Party they are of, as long as they have money.* But though he makes his supposed Country folk such silly regardless fellows, yet he must give us who are concern'd, leave to be more circumspect, and to chuse men (as much as in us lies) that are likely by their Prudence and Moderation to be most serviceable to the Publick: for though we neglect not the Estate, yet we should not (whatever we have done) make that the sole Qualification. For why should such Offices be intrusted in the hands of any whose Brains

lie in their *Chest*, or whose Zeal for the *Protestant* Religion reaches no further than beginning an *Heath*, or who shall think they have laudably discharg'd their *Duty* when they have spent a *thousand pounds* or *two* in making people drunk for the *Honour of the City*. We speak not this to reflect on any, much less the worthy *Gentlemen* late in nomination, (who for ought we hear, were persons very well qualified, and the onely reason why they were not *Elected*, seems to be, that they had too many *Friends* in the *City* who were unwilling to vote them into a Charge so troublesome and expensive ;) we mention it onely to confute that sage *Aphorism* of our little *Sir Poll*, wherewith he struts his *Margin* — That *It is no matter who the City chooses for Sheriffs, so they are wealthy*. But before this, he falls into a *Raving fit*, and talks of carrying the *Cause*, a *Battel*, and a *Victory* ; and this attended with *Houting and Shouting*, and flourishing of *Handkerchiefs*. 'Tis hard to reconcile it to sense, how the *City* can be said thus to *Battel and Triumph* over it self ; but it seems he would have his folks in the *Country* believe that the *Livery-men* went to *Loggerheads* about their *Choice*, and a *pitched field* to have been fought in *Guild-hall*. This is not the first misrepresentation of that business ; and though we thought it had been sufficiently clear'd, and the *Authors* of such *Stories* cover'd with guilty *Blushes* ; yet since he revives it, let us briefly review the matter.

The *City of London* has a *Right* (though this *Libeller* take liberty to jeer at it) practis'd time out of mind, allow'd by many *Charters*, and confirm'd by divers *Acts of Parliament*, freely to elect every year their *Sheriffs*. To this purpose being met in *Common Hall*, the two *Gentlemen*, since *Declared*, were chosen by majority of *Hands* (in the judgment of most indifferent *Spectators*, near *Ten* to one ;) and the present *Sheriffs* gave their *Opinion*, that they were *Elected*. It happened (I know not why, or out of what *designe*) some persons present would, notwithstanding the apparent *Disproportion*, demand a *Poll*, which was as freely granted ; but adjourn'd (most *Citizens* apprehended contrary to former *Custom*) for decision, from time to time for several days after : so that no *Surprize*, *Tumult*, &c. could be pretended. This being admitted and accomplish'd, upon summing up the *Books*, it appeared that the first two had fairly near a thousand *Names* apiece more than the others ; and so they were declared the *Free Choice* of the *City*.

Now where's the *Treason* of all this ? or if there were any *Faction*, on which side did it lie ? How does this business wound the *Church of England*, or concern *Forty one* ? or why must this *Gaffer Two-shoes* post up a *Letter* to the *City of London*, and charge it with *Schism* and *Rebellion* upon this occasion ?

But we must dive a little deeper, if we would sadome the bottom of these pestilent *Scribblers* *Intrigues*. 'Tis too apparent there are a sort of men in the world that would be taken for good *Protestants*, and the most *Loyal Subjects*, who very industriously, though no less subtly, and under odd *Disguises*, endeavour to lessen or utterly efface the belief of the *Popish Plot*, and baulk the prosecution of the *Conspirators*, and at the same time take all occasions (and rather than fail, will make some) to divide and exasperate *Protestants* one against another, and create misunderstandings, and horridly represent the most innocent *Actions*, and particularly amuse people that the *Church of England* is in danger, and the *Government* ready to be invaded by some *Protestants*, and that all *Dissenters* in point of Ceremony are far more dangerous than *Papists* ; that *Forty one* is reviv'd, and a *Rebellion* carrying on, &c.

Now to take right measures of their designs herein, we must consider,

1. That within these two years there was discovered, just when it was ripe for execution, and ready to involve us all in *Bloud* and *Confusion*, A *Damnable Popish Plot*. And that the same was real, we have (after a long *Examination*) it attested by the *King* in repeated *Proclamations*, by several *Parliaments* in unanimous *Votes*, by all the *Judges* of the *Land* in their proceedings, and by the *Church* in publick *Prayers* and *Thanksgivings* for our *Deliverance*. So that whoever shall deny or doubt of it, must necessarily be guilty of the most sawcy impudence, in giving the lye to the greatest *Authorities* on *Earth*, and ought justly to be esteemed as an *Accomplice* or *Abetter* of that horrid *Conspiracy*.

2. The Reality of a *Plot* of that vast undertaking, and so far advanc'd, being granted, can it be supposed, that no body but poor *Ned Coleman* and half a score raskally *Jesuits* were concern'd in it ? 'Tis true, there are some people would gladly lay it wholly on the *Society*. The *Jesuits* (say they) are *Villains*, and always plotting *Treasons*, but it cannot be thought that the *Body of Catholics* could be drawn in to consent to any such *Baseness*.

To

To this we answer, This is but an old thred-bare *Shift*. The Gunpowder-Treason we have oft been told was carried on by a few *Desperado's*, the business in *Ireland* (where there were Two hundred thousand Innocents most barbarously murder'd) was onely the Heat of a few *zealot Tories*, &c. But in truth, these things being of the nature of those, *Que nunquam laudantur nisi peracta*, which are never own'd till accomplish'd, we are to look upon such Pretensions as frivolous and designing. Those that now pretend to abominate it, would, if it had taken effect, have applauded it as brave and meritorious. And whereas they would pin it onely on the Jesuits, 'tis well known most of the *Popish Nobility* and Gentry have persons of that Society for their Confessors. Now if they are (as these little Advocates agree) people of such desperate principles, will they not (having such opportunities) soon leaven the whole Lump? He that acknowledges Jesuits are Plotters, will but in vain deny, that all the rest whose Souls they have the conduct of (which are the greatest part and of the greatest influence in *England*) are very likely to be so too.

3. Agreeing therefore (as necessarily we must) That 'tis not likely a few should undertake such a design, which 'twas impossible to carry on without great numbers of persons of *Quality* and *Estates*; and that 'tis probable the Body of Papists were actually engaged, or fairly disposed to joyn therein; can any vigilance be too great, any care too much? is not a charitable union amongst Protestants necessary, and strict prosecution but requisite to obviate and punish such a Conspiracy?

4. But this Plot having thus taken wind, how should the Traitors secure their reputes, make good their Retreat, or gain present Impunity, and future opportunities for an After-game, but either by an obstinate out-facing, or a Politick diversion? The first they ran as far as 'twould go, witness the impudent denials of the Traitors at the Gibbet, wherein several of them have notoriously been proved Liars, as *Gavan, Ireland, &c.* Witness too their numerous bare-fac'd Pamphlets, as, *The Compendium, &c.* But finding this too short, they take up the second: Then comes on the forging of a Protestant Plot, (happily discovered at Colonel Mansels Lodgings) the Buzz that the Church of *England* was in danger, and the out-cry of *Forty one*, without the least grounds in the world: but thus Thieves pursued, hope to escape by crying *stop Thief* after an honest man; and crafty *Lapwings* draw people from their own Nests, by fluttering and Mewing at a distance. And though it were the most unaccountable notion imaginable, That the Church of *England* should suffer or be endangered by a vigorous prosecution of *Popish Traitors*, yet by the industry of the Broachers, this conceit has not a little served their interest.

5. They have therefore procured, (or at least so it has happened) That multitudes of wheedling squinting Pamphlets are daily spawn'd abroad, some to Ridicule the Plot, and Asperse the Evidence, others to Create Jealousies and Animosities; some to balance Accounts, and represent Papists and dissenting Protestants equally dangerous. And though the first are actually proved guilty, but the second besides contributing to His Majesties Restoration, have ever since most peacefully demean'd themselves, yet so prevalent are these dividing Charms, That the Church of *England* is not only set at a greater distance, and so new Fews raised, but things almost brought to that pass, that the *Popish Plot* seems forgot by Protestants; and every one that zealously endeavours to detect it, and bring the prime known Conspirators to Justice, is presently stigmatiz'd as a Phanatick, a Factious Fellow, an enemy to the Church and Government, &c. and what greater Advantages can the Romanists hope for?

6. In order to this, observe what slender opportunities they lay hold on. A little debate happens in *London* about Sheriffs, straight the whole City is Arraign'd as ready for Rebellion. The City in Common-hall humbly desires its Loyalty to be signified to the King, to take off base misrepresentations; protests its resolution to stand by him to the utmost peril; begs His Majesty to make use of His Great Council, as a sure Expedient to frustrate the wicked Councils of Rome. And the Citizens assembled, signify their joyning in this humble Petition, and demonstrate their zealous affection to His Majesties Person and Government, by unanimous (but not disorderly) Acclamations; and this is here carpt at, as Tumult and Sedition, and the Triumphs of the City for a Victory over the Church of *England*! Can any thing be more unjust, or indeed more Seditious! or tend more to amuse our fellow-Subjects in the Country, or more dishonour and render us contemptible to Nations abroad?

Yet still our Author is sore offended, that any body should say there are any such Ambibious Creatures amongst us, as Church-Papists, or Protestants in Masquerade; but is not this a shrewd sign that himself is one? *Conscius ipse sibi, &c.* For though no good man,

man, much less the whole City of London (as they villainously assert) ever said or thought, That all that go to Church were such; for without doubt, the Church of England in her Doctrine, and by the Writings of her Learned Members, both Prelates and others, hath been, and is the greatest Bulwark against Popery; yet 'tis not impossible, that Jesuits and Papists may shelter themselves under her Mantle, and in their Pamphlets, or when called before a Magistrate, pretend to be her Sons. And such furious ones commonly they seem, (by which mark they may be known) that they are as like those of Zebedee, to be calling for fire on all their Brethren, that cannot keep pace with them in Ceremonies and External Observations. The Term Church-Papist is not new, but older much than 41; and if we see a Jesuitical or Atheistical villain, that merely for secular ends, or to create disturbances, vapours of his being a Son of the Church, and yet endeavours to weaken the Protestant Interest, whistle over a Popish Plot against the Life of the King, and divert the prosecution of the Traiterous Conspirators, &c. how then can we more appositely express him, than by the Title of a Protestant in Masquerade? And though no Protestant holds it lawful, yet 'tis no wonder for a Rank Papist to swallow Oaths, and joyn in outward Communion contrary to Conscience; witness their Doctrine of Dispensations, &c. I shall onely give you the Testimonies of two Authors, one a Papist when he wrote, the other but late before come over from them; and so neither unacquainted with their practices: the first a Secular Priest (during their quarrel with the Jesuits) in a Treatise printed Anno 1601. Intituled, *A Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Priest*, p. 97. has these words: — *The Jesuits have freely permitted Catholicks to go to Church with Protestants, and make no sin nor scruple of it; thus no Law could take hold of them, for who could be known to be a Catholick?*

Gent. Did they grant this Liberty to all?

Priest. In this sort they did it. If one were a notorious known Catholick where he came, then they taught it to be unlawful in that place to go to Church, by reason of scandal, and no otherwise; but if one were not certainly known to be such a Catholick, he might go without offence; upon condition, that if he heard any Heretical Doctrine preached, which moved him to doubt in any point of Faith, he should presently come to some of those Fathers to be resolved.

The second, one John Capley a Seminary Priest, (converted from the Romish Church) in a Book called — *Doctrinal and Moral Observations*, published Anno 1612. in his Epistle to the Reader, thus expresses himself, — *I must give you farther notice, that there are in this Realm many dissembling Protestants, [there's a Synonymous term for the Protestants in Masquerade] who outwardly do all the acts of Religion belonging to this Church of England, either to stay in their places in the Common-wealth, or to avoid the Penal Laws; and yet in their hearts are resolved Believers of the Roman Faith, egregiously dissembling both with God and men, and practising most notorious equivocation, not sticking to take Oaths, receive Sacraments, go to Church, and commit many a like act directly against their Consciences and perswasion.*

Thus you see by Catholick Testimonies what has been done; and is there not as much reason for them to play these tricks now as ever? Therefore let the Blister rise on that false Tongue that would wheedle us into too good an opinion of Popish Innocency.

Having thus laid open our Authors main design, I have not only Answered him, but two and twenty Pamphlets besides, for they are all of a piece. As for the rest of his Libel, 'tis fooling and impertinence. Did the people in King Edward's, or Queen Maries days, first Model and Compile your Religion? how then will you satisfie the Papists when they ask you, where it was before Luther? In Queen Elizabeths, King Jameses, and King Charles the First's time, people went to their Parish Churches, Ergo, there is now no Popish Plot, nor any body that can make mischief under an honest pretence. But how are you sure, that if ever an Army of sixty thousand men get into the heart of our Kingdom, they shall so easily Conquer it? Perhaps you are North Country, but I assure you I am West, and our Volk are not of the opinion: for if ever we catch you with your Threescore Thousands, be they French or Irish, or any other Papists, I, or Scottish Presbyters either, we will in defence of our King, and our Religion, send you all to Purgatory, and then how will your Worship answer it, for Beragging and Bepoxing the Pope at this rate? We will not vilifie any honest Church of England men, but love and honour them; yet we will implore God and the King, that Popish and all other Treasons, may be fully detected and punished.

Thus withing you to keep your self close, and prevent (if you can) a smarter Answer shortly from the Pillory, or the Whipping-post I commit you to your destiny,

F U N I S.